



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

September 22, 2003

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

This is in response to your letter to the Attorney General regarding reports of monitoring of Iraqi-Americans and racial profiling. We apologize for the delay in this response.

Unlawful discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity within our criminal justice system is unacceptable. Moreover, as the President, the Attorney General, and the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights have said emphatically on numerous occasions, using race as a proxy for criminal behavior is wrong.

The Department is aware that some of the actions taken to ensure the nation's security immediately preceding the liberation of Iraq caused concern among some of your Arab-American constituents. In fact, as you know, on November 20, 2001, former Assistant Attorney General Boyd personally hosted a town hall-style meeting in Dearborn to hear the concerns of local Arab-American residents. As Mr. Boyd noted there, the Department is committed to ensuring that individual civil liberties are carefully safeguarded even as we take on this critical battle against terrorism.

Thank you for expressing your concerns regarding this issue. If we can be of further assistance on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,

William E. Moschella
Assistant Attorney General

cc: The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Chairman